worlds. A number of legends deal with the cleverness of old people. There are old aunts and old grandmothers who eat children left in their care, and old men and women are frequently deserted by the Pygmies when they move camp (in their legends). Yet these old people can use their powers for good, if so inclined, as in the legend of the old woman with yaws who tried to save three young Pygmies from being killed and eaten by a tricky old man. Also, of course, it is the old people who have the most success in dealing with the *satani*. But (discussion of this aspect of old age is given in the next section) the legends do reveal quite clearly that old age, when accompanied by disability, is regarded with loathing by the Pygmies as, indeed, is disability by itself. In the legends, old people and cripples are given every chance to prove that they are still useful members of society. The old cripple who is deserted but who can kill a *satani* and rejoin his hunting group is welcomed back. But another old cripple who cannot move at all when he is deserted, although he kills two *satani* who attack him, is left to die. Old women seem particularly suspect, and I cite here an example of sanctioned matricide. I might add that I have never known this to occur and that, in my experience, the Mbuti take great care of their old people. At the same time I must admit to having seen no complete cripples and to having heard disquieting stories

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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about cripples that just happened to disappear or who suddenly just "died completely."

There was once a Pygmy named Butuwa. He was in the forest, and was sleeping with his wife, children, and old mother. His mother had no legs. In the middle of the night Butuwa said to his wife: "Mother is sleeping soundly; get the children together and let's go away." So they quietly picked up their belongings, and, together with their children, they crept away. They walked and walked and walked.

Early in the morning the old woman woke up. She said: "Where is everybody? Oh! They are a bad family, they have gone off and left their legless old mother to die. I will follow them." So saying, she stood on her head and walked and walked and walked until she caught up with them, walking on her head. She was very angry with them for having deserted her, and told them how bad they were to have left her alone in the forest. That night they all went to sleep together.

In the middle of the night the Pygmy said to his wife: "Now mother is really asleep; get the children together and let's go away." So they collected the children, picked up their belongings, and stole away. They walked and walked and walked.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Early in the morning the old woman woke up, and she was very, very angry to find that her family had deserted her again. So she stood on her head and she walked and walked and walked, until she caught up with them, walking on her head. She told her son how bad he was. She was very cross indeed. Her son went off into the forest and gathered some honey. And then he got a very bad worm and put it in the honey. He returned to the camp, and said: "Don't be angry with me, mother. Look, I have brought you some fine honey." And the legless old mother ate up the honey, worm and all. And the worm ate up the legless old mother's stomach, and the legless old mother died.

Butuwa left and went to another camp where they had relations. When they got to the camp, their relations asked: "What news; where is your mother?" "Oh! She died," said Butuwa. "That's too bad," said the others.

*Bati*

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### 3. Legends Dealing with Relationships to the Supernatural

Above, we see animals appearing in connection with the quality of cleverness and how an excess of this quality can break through the flimsy barrier between the natural and the supernatural world. Here we consider the large number of legends in the collection in which animals appear with almost exclusive reference to their supernatural quality. Some legends

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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561 [433] although once again the general pattern in no way implies an invariable rule.

[854] Infants sometimes accompany their mother on her activities, or are left in camp in the charge of youths or elders of either sex.

561 857 Children who do not stay in the *bopi* to play or to imitate adult activities accompany their parents according to sex; however, boys who cannot do much more than walk will, on the hunt, be more likely to accompany their mother. Children up to the age of puberty frequently prepare meals for themselves, not only in the process of "playing house" but also when together as a group. They go together to the streams to fish or crab, to the forest to gather and maybe to hunt for small or slow game, and together they cook and eat these foods. Older children may also co-operate in building a bachelor hut, though more often they will occupy one that has been abandoned, if they want one at all. But even before puberty they are beginning to help on the hunt, the girls with the beating and the boys with guarding the extremities of the nets.

561 883 After puberty the activities of youths are temporarily closer to those of their parents, causing some friction and disaffection, particularly between fathers and sons. The sibling groups, however, are reunited; youths now have activities and responsibilities comparable to those of their older married brothers and sisters. It is the younger married couples and the older youths who are primarily responsible for hunting and gathering, not only for food but also for the other material necessities of life, such as saplings and leaves for the huts, bark for clothing, wood for the fires. It is also this age group that manufac- [463] tures, without any other form of specialization, the entire limited range of artifacts that constitutes Mbuti material culture.

561 887 589 The older couples, widows and widowers, retire with regret but without shame or stigma from communal life, and to the end they will act in divers useful ways, in particular looking after children left in the camp while the rest of the band is off on the hunt. Older people [283] also spend a great deal of their time making the twine used in hunting nets, plaiting vine belts and preparing food. They can expect to be fed by the rest of the band, regardless of its kinship composition, and at the same time they are free to undertake whatever individual hunting 732 and gathering they can. The sick or crippled enjoy similar status, be- 734 ing also unable to keep up with the rigors of the hunt. That such people are regarded as a potential danger to society is seen in the legends of old and crippled people who die or who disappear or who

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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become spirits, but there is no evidence of the old or crippled actually being treated with anything but a care and respect that, judging from appearances, derives more from affection and a sense of responsibility (not unmixed with a certain amount of rare forethought) rather than from fear.

## HUNTING TECHNIQUES

The iron tools available to the Mbuti since the inception of their relationship with the village tribes have not, apparently, tempted them to develop their hunting technology. They do not dig pits or make traps, nor do they erect spear-falls, techniques employed by the villagers. To make their traditional technology more efficient, however, the Mbuti do use iron blades for their spears, axes, knives and arrow blades. The spear blade makes the hunting of elephants much easier, though old Mbuti assert that they used to kill elephants with fire-hardened wooden spears. The knives and machetes undoubtedly make the cutting of leaves, saplings and vines much quicker and easier, and the honey ax affords simple access to beehives deep within hollow branches or tree trunks. The arrow tip is used more by the archers than by the net-hunters, it seems, but both groups rely primarily on poisoned arrows. The bows of neither group are large or efficient, accuracy is made doubly difficult by the limited vision of the forest environment, and hunters often aim at a sound or a movement of leaves rather than by sight of the actual quarry. With the poisoned arrow even a light graze will bring down the quarry, whereas with the metal-tipped arrow direct impact on a vital spot is essential. Even so, so chancy is Mbuti archery that throughout the forest the practice is to hold a handful of arrows in the hand that holds the bow; this enables them to be drawn and fired with remarkable rapidity. Naturally many are lost, but the loss of a poisoned arrow is of far less economic significance than the loss of a metal tip.

Traditional hunting techniques include archery, net-hunting and spear hunting, and occasional snaring (usually by youths, sometimes by old men). Nets vary in length from one to three hundred feet, and are about four feet in height. Seven small nets, together with beaters, might form a circle of over one hundred yards in diameter. Any area smaller than this would be impractical, as the game would be scared away before the nets could be set up and the beaters get in place. Even seven nets of average length would only form a circle barely two hun-

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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him awake with her wailing and would probably forget to cook for him. He set off at once for the village, grumbling, and Moke went with him. Masisi started one of his loud tirades, saying in his sharp voice that Cephu never looked after his children properly, so it was no wonder they died. This must have reminded Kenge of his joke, because he started laughing again, or perhaps he was laughing at Masisi, but Masisi got angrier than ever and said he was going straight to the village to tell Cephu what he thought of him. He stamped angrily after Njobo and Moke, still shouting deprecating remarks about the bereaved father.

Kenge laughed happily and said that there was going to be a dreadful noise when Masisi got back to the village, so we would do better to stay where we were until it was all over. Manyalibo, who had not said a word, suggested looking for *itaba*, a sweet edible root, and with food our foremost thought we set off.

When we got back to the village in the late afternoon we found everyone sitting around outside their little houses, staring gloomily at nothing in particular. Masisi was still talking loudly, pointing at the sky and over in the direction of Cephu's camp, from which I could hear women wailing, and saying that it was a shame that Cephu should let his children die and cause everyone so much trouble. Tungana mournfully said that he didn't like funerals; the Negroes made so much noise at them. Masisi's younger brother, Mambunia, still a bachelor because one of his legs was crippled with paralysis and he was not able to hunt well enough to support a family, added in shrill falsetto that Cephu was so inconsiderate and such a trouble-maker that he would probably let his daughter die completely—completely and absolutely.

I did not understand what he meant at first, but it provoked an immediate response from Asofalinda, Ekianga's widowed sister. She strode across the camp, marching with long swinging strides to where Mambunia was sitting, his paralyzed leg stuck out in front